



MFC News

Caring for the Trees and Forests of Mississippi Since 1926

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August 2014



August Is...

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National Water Quality Month

The Mississippi Forestry Commission provides equal employment opportunities and services to all individuals regardless of disability, race, age, religion, color, gender, national origin, or political affiliation.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider



- ◆ **Skin Cancer and Tanning.** Tanned skin may look healthy, but a tan is actually the skin's response to damage from ultraviolet (UV) light. [More.](#)
- ◆ **Unhealthy Adults Who Switch to Good Health Habits Lower Their Heart Disease Risk .** Young adults who drop their bad health habits can reduce their risk of heart disease as they age, new research suggests. [More.](#)
- ◆ **Strenuous Activity Before Bedtime Helps Teens Get Better Sleep .** Young adults who exercised vigorously before bed ended up getting better sleep than their peers who reported less strenuous evening activity, a new study found. [More.](#)

Newsletter Deadlines

All submissions are welcome. Photographs are encouraged (although space limitations may curtail inclusion). Items must be received by the **10th of the month** to be included in the next month's issue. E-mail submissions (*in Microsoft Word*) and photos to

lharris@mfc.state.ms.us

Cigarettes As A Wildland Fire Cause

Submitted by Randy Wilson, MFC Fire Investigator. **Factors to Consider:**

Cigarettes cause wildfires infrequently and only under certain environmental and physical conditions. All MFC firefighters should consider the following factors required for ignition of a wildfire by cigarettes.

- Temperature must be **above 80°F**.
- Relative Humidity must be **below 22%**.
- Cigarette orientation to fuel bed.
- Proximity to origin.
- Evidence of cigarette use as a delayed timing device.

The general public will often mention to MFC firefighters that a road side start **must** have been caused by a discarded cigarette. In actuality, road side starts are more likely caused by an arsonist's hot sets or equipment use (i.e., exhaust malfunctions, scraping/dragging chains on asphalt).

Changes to EPA Water Rules

The EPA is holding listening session concerning the proposed changes to the water rules . The proposed rule were released for public comment on March 25, 2014, whereby the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers seek to revise the definition of "Waters of the United States" (WOTUS) under the Clean Water Act (CWA). The agencies emphasize that the proposal seeks to provide regulatory clarity after significant uncertainty following two Supreme Court decisions.

The public has an opportunity to comment on the proposal until Oct. 20, 2014. Ron Curry, EPA Region 6 administrator out of Dallas, Texas, said, "We are very interested in hearing the producers' perspective on this very important rule. It is our job to listen and encourage producers to comment as to how the proposed rule may affect agriculture."

According to the EPA, the proposed rule preserves existing CWA exemptions and exclusions for agricultural activities. Additionally, the agencies, in coordination with the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), will now exempt 56 established NRCS conservation practices from the CWA Section 404 dredged or fill permitting requirements, if they occur in waters covered by the CWA.

More coming later on this important change to our "Waters of the United States".

For more information concerning the Water of the United States Proposed Rule, visit this website: <http://www2.epa.gov/uswaters>. On this site, you will find the proposed rules, myths and truths about the rule, how to submit a formal comment (open until 10/20/2014) and access to all documents related to this rulemaking.

Odds & Ends Forestry News

Fires, Disease, Pests and More Threaten Urban Trees.

While trees provide numerous benefits to communities—energy savings, shade, runoff mitigation, and more—we continue to cut down these trees faster than we replace them, according to the U.S. Forest Service. [More.](#)

Tree Pittsburg Hires Goats To Manage Invasive Species.

Pittsburgh, PA - Tree Pittsburg regularly uses human volunteers to weed, mulch, and water the city's trees. The organization has now added new recruits, hiring more than 30 goats from a local farm to clear undergrowth on tricky terrain—a steep hillside. [More.](#)

Genetic engineering may help save the American chestnut.

[Bloomberg View] If the greatest living American were a tree, it would probably be the chestnut. Nat King Cole sang about it. Abraham Lincoln probably built his log cabin from it. The telegraph era, which required tall poles of strong wood, was enabled by it. [More.](#)

Wisconsin worries about its logging future as younger generation loses interest.

[Green Bay Press Gazette] Many young people are not interested in pursuing a career in the field. Long hours, mediocre pay and a more informed general public are keeping younger generations out of the forests, Sawle said. [More.](#)

30 years after Chernobyl disaster, "undead" forests won't decompose.

[Nature World News] Almost three decades after the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster, dead forests in the immediate radiation zone are still not decaying. Researchers say that this shows a disturbing facet of long-term radiation exposure that is little considered - how radiation impacts the process of decomposition. [More.](#)

Britain Oldest Tree

Britain's oldest tree is discovered in a Welsh churchyard and it's more than Five Thousand year old. [More.](#)

Tree Disease Sweeps Through Everglades

A plant disease blazing through South Florida is killing off swamp bay trees, an important part of the

architecture of the Everglades that provides food for a vast range of wildlife and traditional medicine for the Seminole Tribe. [More.](#)

Study Shows Savannah Tree Canopy Shirking.

Savannah, GA - Chatham County, GA has lost the equivalent of three football fields of tree canopy every day, on average, over the last 15 years, according to an ongoing analysis commissioned by the Savannah Tree Foundation. Most of the loss is in locations where developers have razed pine plantations and natural hardwood forests to make way for houses, parking lots, warehouses, and businesses. [More](#)

Large Loss Fires \$\$\$

According to NFPA, large-loss fires accounted for nearly \$800 million in direct property losses nationwide in 2011. The Bastrop County Complex (Texas) wildfire alone resulted in \$400 million in property loss and was the largest of the large-loss fires recorded during that year.

August's Birthdays



William Cook -1
 Louis Anderson -3
 Sherri Coleman -3
 William Jefferson -4
 James Edwards -5
 Billy Dorsey -6
 Douglas Buchanan -9
 Ricky Hartness -9
 Kenneth McNease -10
 Brandon Haley -11
 Larry Boone -12
 Judy Deare -12
 Benjamin Jenkins -12
 Thomas Gunn -13
 Charles Belk -14
 Lisa Harris -14
 Randall Brooks -15
 Johnny Hobson -15
 Jeff Yelverton -16
 Kenneth Berryman -17
 Randy Catt -18
 Nicholas Johnson -18
 Paul Tadlock -18
 Mandy Harrell -20
 Grady Abel -21
 James Parker -21
 Kenneth Cline -22
 Ronald Stafford -22
 Nathan Thornton -22
 Orlando Ellerby -23
 Marvin Hogue -23
 Dennis Dauterive -24
 Johnny Keys -24
 John Butcher -25
 Martin Little -25
 Dustin Barnett -26
 Charles Eidson -27
 Scott Miles -27
 John Stark -27
 Daniel Crump -28
 Ryan Rowell -28
 Marcus Gilbert -30
 Coley Bryant -31
 Wesley Crum -31



Personnel Personals

SAYING

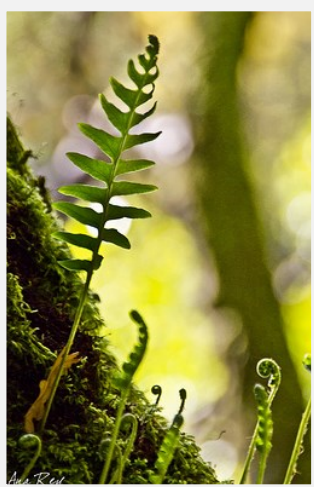


TO OUR FRIENDS

- John Butcher, Forest Ranger, Jackson County, SED
- James Tatum, Forest Ranger, Itawamba County, NED
- Darrick D. Rawlings, Accountant Auditor, State Office

Retirement NEXT EXIT ➔

- Anna Whatley, Administrative Assistant, Covington County, SCD



August 2014

Page 4



Leaves:

Type: simple, opposite, deciduous

Size: 2.5" - 5.0" long

Margin: entire

Apex: tapered or pointed

Base: wedge-shaped or rounded

Shape: ovate to elliptical

Color: dark green above, lighter below

Surface: rough, stiff hairs above; pubescent below

Venation: arcuate

Twigs:

Size: slender

Color: light green; then reddish brown to gray

Surface: current year's growth very pubescent

Buds:

Size: terminal <0.25" long; laterals smaller

Shape: pointed

Color: brown

Surface: covered in rusty hair

Fruit and Flowers:

Drupe: berrylike; in flat-topped clusters

Size: 0.25" dia.

Shape: globose

Color: white

Flower: monoecious; perfect; in flat-topped, showy clusters, 2.0" - 4.0" wide;

flowers, 4 petals, white; 0.25" dia.

Bark: young bark smooth and gray-brown; then flaky and broken; eventually blocky

Physical Attributes:

Form: single stem

Size: 48.0', mature

Growth Rate: rapid; 48.0' maximum @ 20 yrs

Life Span: long (>100 yrs)

Tolerances:

Shade: intermediate

Drought: low

Fire: low

Anaerobic: high

Propagation: seed (cold stratification required); bare root; container; cuttings

Other: resprout/coppice potential

Habitat and Ecology:

Site: wide range of sites from moist stream banks to wooded bluffs, and limestone outcrops

Soil Texture: fine - medium

Soil pH: 5.9 - 7.5

Range: from Ontario in a fanwise fashion extending to Texas in the Southwest and Florida in the East; in Mississippi, counties along the Mississippi River, counties across the central part of the State, and Itawamba, Lee, Chickasaw and

Clay counties in northeast Mississippi as reported to the NRCS Plants Database; probably in other areas of the State as well

Wildlife Value and Uses:

provides excellent ground cover for wildlife; fruit is eaten by numerous species of birds, browsed by white-tailed deer

Timber Value and Uses: no commercial value in the timber industry

Landscaping Info: could be a desirable choice where a thick hedge or border is needed

Who Am I?



Senate Hearing On USFS Fire Funding

Posted on July 14, 2014 by Bill Gabbert at Wildfire Today.

Tuesday, July 15 at 10:30 ET the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee will hold a hearing on the Administration's budget request of \$4.8 billion for the U.S. Forest Service in fiscal year 2015, which begins October 1, 2014.

One of the prime topics of discussion is expected to be the President's proposal to fund some wildfires in a manner similar to other natural disasters, keeping the funds separate from non-fire activities. This method of funding is supported by western lawmakers and the Western Governors' Association, but there is opposition from some Republican politicians.

Several competing bills have been introduced that have similar provisions. They would all protect the US Forest Service and the Department of the Interior or routine budget items from being pilaged in order to pay firefighting bills. Senator John McCain last week introduced another bill with many of the same goals, but in addition his legislation would encourage timber harvesting and thinning, while streamlining some of the environmental restrictions that might otherwise slow down the projects.

As usual in hearings like this, it is likely that the topic of federal air tankers will be discussed.

Wildland Fire Potential Outlook

The national significant wildland fire potential outlook for August, September and October from the National Inter-agency Fire Center has predicated a below normal fire potential for our area. This predication was issued on July 1 and will be updated on the first of each month. I have listed the high points of this reported below. For the full report, use this link: http://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf.

The predication for the month of August 2014 is:

- Above normal fire potential will continue over most of California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Above normal conditions could possibly develop across the New England

states and Four Corners area if short-term weather develops that would support fire outbreaks.

- Below normal fire potential will continue over northern Idaho, Montana and portions of Wyoming, Colorado and South Dakota. Portions of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, Louisiana and Mississippi will also continue to see below normal fire potential

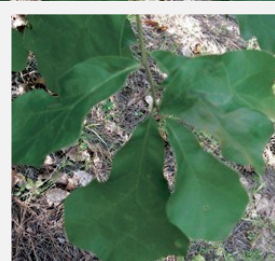
The predication for the month of September 2014 is again below normal fire potential will return across much of the Southeastern U. S. except for gulf coastal areas and most of the Coastal Atlantic States.

(Continued on page 8)

Tree Knowledge -

Who Am I?

July 2014 was the Arkansas Oak (*Quercus arkansana* Sargent). Check out page 79 in the Mississippi Trees book.



Leaf



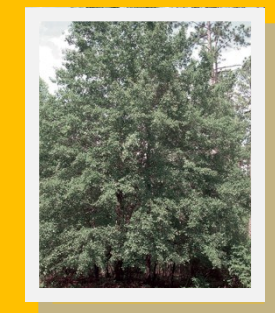
Fruit



Bark



Twig



Form



Mississippi Firewise

Facts about the NFPA Firewise Communities Program

The Firewise Communities Program was developed in 1986 in response to the realization that the problem of home destruction from brush, grass and forest fires was one of national scope.

- The Program teaches residents about the hazards of wildfire, and how they can put simple, smart practices into play around their homes, and encourage neighbors to work together to help prepare for and reduce the risk of home destruction due to wildfires.
- The Program's mission is to protect people and property in communities at risk from wildfire through the National Fire Protection Association's role as a visible, trusted and recognized advocate, consensus builder and authoritative leader.
- The Program is co-sponsored by the USDA Forest Service, the US Department of the Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters.
- The Firewise website, www.firewise.org, was launched in 1996 to provide the best available information on wildfire safety for homes to a national audience.
- In 1999, a series of Firewise Communities Planning Workshops sprung up throughout the country. From 1999 - 2003, more than 3,000 residents, firefighters, community leaders and business people participated in these workshops.
- In Fall 2002, the national Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program was established.
- The Firewise Communities/USA program has documented local grant funding and volunteer hours

totaling more than \$132 million from 2003 to 2012.

- As of 2012, 10 out of the 12 pilot sites are still enrolled in the Program, and recognized as official Firewise communities after 10 years.
- Since its inception, more than 1.4 million people have been directly affected by the Program, and many more indirectly, have been influenced.
- As of September 2013, the program has 964 active Firewise communities in 40 states, with a goal of 1,000 by the end of 2013.
- In 2010, NFPA established the Wildland Fire Operations Division. The Firewise Communities Program is a program within the Division, and the Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program is a major component of the Firewise Communities Programs.



LEARN MORE about how to keep families safe and reduce homeowners' risk for wildfire damage at www.firewise.org.

MFA News

Mississippi Envirothon Winners

The Hillcrest Christian School Envirothon Team from Jackson won First Place in the statewide Mississippi Envirothon Competition held May 2nd at Roosevelt State Park in Morton. Team members are Jordan Barksdale, Grey Tyler, Zane Warren, Matt Myers, and Thomas Wilson. Advisors are Heather Giles and Darrow Anderson.

After intense training, this team competed against 21 other teams from around the state. As state champions they will compete for thousands of dollars in college scholarships and other prizes to be awarded at the Illinois Regional Envirothon, held August 3-7, 2014 at Loyola University of Chicago in Woodstock, Illinois.



The Mississippi Envirothon is funded by a grant from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.

Tree Farm Second Comment Period Opens

A second comment period for the updated ATFS Standards of Sustainability opened on July 2nd. This comment period will be open until September 2nd and the public is invited to provide feedback on the proposed [2015-2020 Standards](#). To read the full press release, visit the [ATFS website](#).

Upcoming Events!!!

August 7

Managing Doves, Deer, Quail, Wild Hog, and other Wildlife,

Mayhew. The tour will be held in Oktibbeha County off Old Hwy. 82 close to the MSU Golf Course, just west of Mayhew. The tour starts at 6:00 p.m. and ends with a meal at MSU's North Farm. Contact the Lowndes County Extension Office at (662) 328-2111 for additional information.

August 9

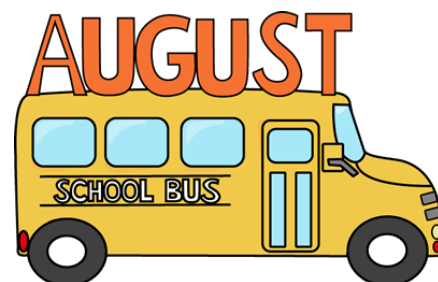
Wildlife Conference,

Ellisville. Ronald Whitehead Technology Center at Jones County Junior College, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. This workshop will offer four credit hours for foresters and loggers. Please register by August 1st by calling (601) 428-5201 or by e-mailing ktolbert@ext.mstate.edu.

September 19-20

Mid-South Forestry Equipment Show,

Starkville. This is the longest-running live logging/biomass event in the country and only such venue located in the heart of the South's forest industry. For more information, visit midsouthforestry.org.



(Continued from page 5, Wildland Fire Potential Outlook)

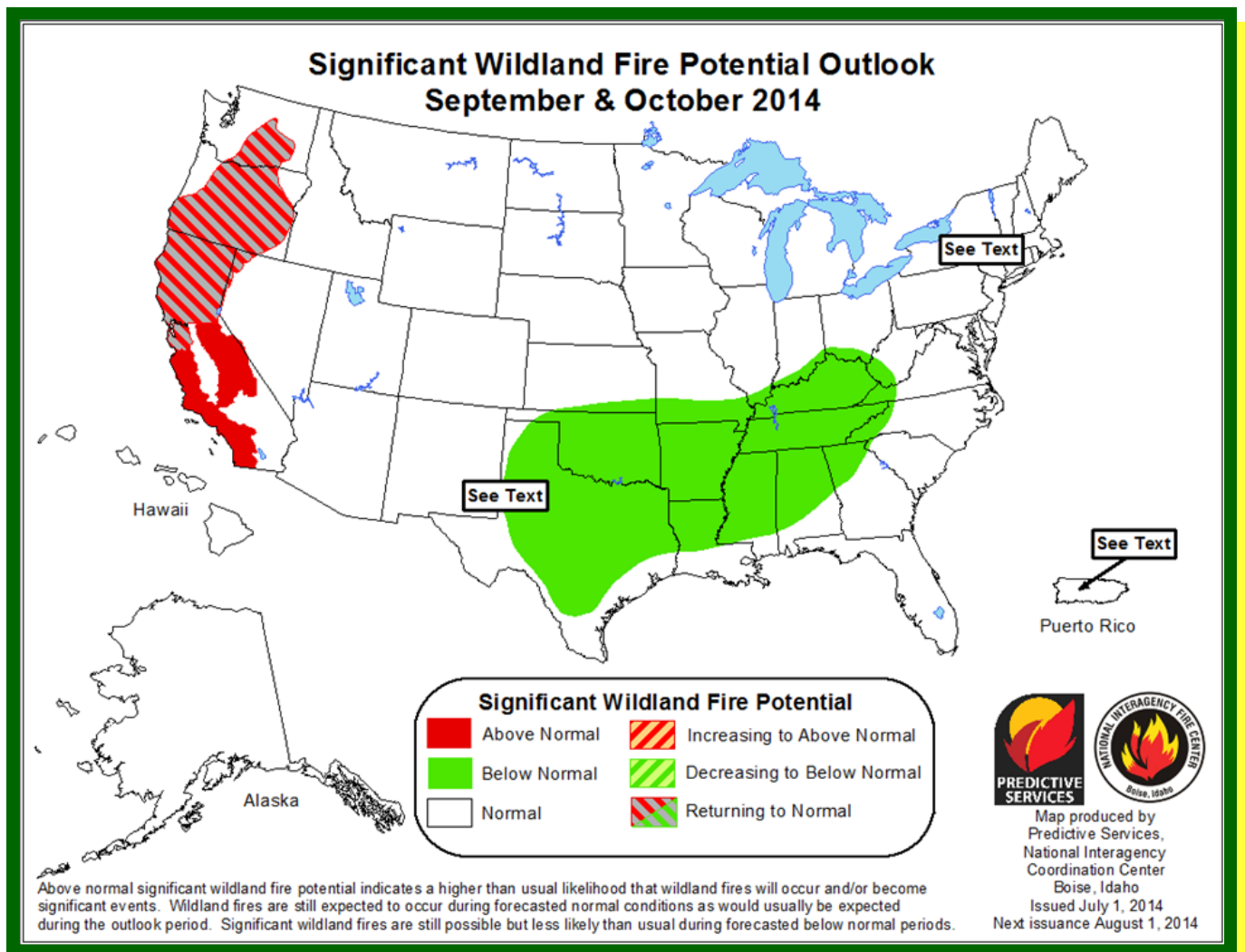
If you want to break it down by geographic area, we are located in the southern area which is expected to have a normal to below normal fire potentials from July to October. Robust rain activity over the last month has produced a wetter environment for the majority of the Southern Area with the exception of isolated areas of the Atlantic States. Drought is mostly absent east of the Mississippi River and current and forecast drought remains isolated to Oklaho-

ma and Texas. Puerto Rico has seen below average rain fall the last month and this pattern is expected to persist through the summer. The highest ignition potential will remain over the southern coastal plain and tropical activity is not expected to affect this area until July or August.

Expect continued rainfall chances for portions of the Southern Area through summer and especially into the fall. Expect both warmer and cooler temperature periods and typical afternoon and evening diurnal

storm activity. Seasonal to below average tropical rain activity is expected for Puerto Rico.

With the exception of Puerto Rico and areas of the interior central Atlantic region, no particular areas of fire concern are expected during the outlook period. The Atlantic tropical season is ongoing and a land falling storm could be a potential significant high rain fall weather event, though development potential should be below average.



For additional maps, please visit this site: http://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/extended_outlook.png.

What Is The Most Famous Wildfire Photograph Ever Taken?

Go back in time to September 15th, Fairbanks, Alaska for this article.

From About.com/Forestry.

For about a week now, there's been a medium-size manhunt under way across the West. The man everyone's been hunting for is John McColgan of Fairbanks.

McColgan hadn't done anything wrong, unless you count disappearing and not being easy to find. Dozens of people, from firefighters to web spooks to reporters, were hunting for the guy. McColgan was busy becoming a daddy, though, and not being very cooperative about being tracked down.

It all started with a fire, a camera, and a couple of cow elk. McColgan, a fire behavior analyst employed by the Alaska Fire Service, was working on the Bitterroot National Forest in Montana. It was Sunday, August 6, the day that several fires burned together near Sula into one 100,000-acre blaze. He was standing on a bridge over the East Fork of the Bitterroot River, and shot the photo with his Kodak DC280 digital camera.

Next thing he knew, the manhunt was

on.

A jpg of the image was sent from one person to another person, and within about 24 hours the elk photo had world-wide-webbed its way across the West and wound up on the computer screens of dozens of people. Everyone wanted to know where it was taken and who took it.

"Best darned elk photo I've ever seen."

"Best darned fire photo I've ever seen."

"Best darned photo, period, I've ever seen."

Though dozens of people in several different states were flinging emails and phone calls around for a week or so, it was the Missoulian in Montana who finally solved the mystery and tracked McColgan down. Yes he had been in Montana. And yes he now was in Alaska. The reason? He'd headed back to Fairbanks for the birth of his son. That's where the paper finally ran him to ground, and that's where he was when he told reporter Rob Chaney that he'd just happened to be in the right place at the right time. He said he's been in fire

for 20 years, and that August 6 ranks in the top three of all the fire behavior he's ever seen. And he told Chaney that the elk were gathering at the river.

"They know where to go, where their safe zones are," he said. "A lot of wildlife did get driven down there to the river. There were some bighorn sheep there. A small deer was standing right underneath me, under the bridge."

Many people have never even seen an elk. Most of those who have, even those who've seen thousands of them, never get to see an image like this. Most people don't get to see fire like this, either. Thanks to McColgan, thousands of people have seen this stunning image, and thanks to Chaney, we all know who to thank.

Do you know which picture we are talking about? Picture will be in the September 2014 issues of *MFC News*.

Largest Wildland Fire Losses

- **October 1918** - Cloquet, Minnesota: \$35 million in 1918 dollars.
- **June 1990** - Santa Barbara, California: \$273 million loss in 1990 dollars.
- **October 1991** - Oakland, California: \$1.5 billion loss in 1991 dollars.
- **October 1993** - Orange County, California: \$528 million loss in 1993 dollars.
- **May-June 1998** - Florida: \$395 million loss in 1998 dollars.
- **May 2000** - Los Alamos, New Mexico: \$1 billion loss in 2000 dollars.
- **October 2003** - Julian, California: \$1.1 billion loss in 2003 dollars.; and San Bernardino, California: \$975 million in 2003 dollars.
- **October 2007** - San Diego County, California: \$1.8 billion in 2007 dollars.
- **November 2008** - Sacramento, California: \$800 million loss in 2008 dollars.

Source: National Fire Protection Association.

Wildfire...Dry, Hot and Windy

From: **Wildfires Article, Forest Fires Information, Wildland Fires Facts -- National Geographic.** <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/natural-disasters/wildfires/>

Uncontrolled blazes fueled by weather, wind, and dry underbrush, wildfires can burn acres of land—and consume everything in their paths—in mere minutes.

On average, more than 100,000 wildfires, also called wildland fires or forest fires, clear 4 million to 5 million acres (1.6 million to 2 million hectares) of land in the U.S. every year. In recent years, wildfires have burned up to 9 million acres (3.6 million hectares) of land. A wildfire moves at speeds of up to 14 miles an hour (23 kilometers an hour), consuming everything—trees, brush, homes, even humans—in its path.

There are three conditions that need to be present in order for a wildfire to burn, which firefighters refer to as the fire triangle: fuel, oxygen, and a heat source. Fuel is any flammable material surrounding a fire, including trees, grasses, brush, even homes. The greater an area's fuel load, the more intense the fire. Air supplies the oxygen a fire needs to burn. Heat sources help spark the wildfire and bring fuel to temperatures hot enough to ignite. Lightning, burning campfires or cigarettes, hot winds, and even the sun can all provide sufficient heat to spark a wildfire.

Although four out of five wildfires are started by people, nature is usually more than happy to help fan the flames. Dry weather and drought convert green vegetation into bone-dry, flammable fuel; strong winds spread fire quickly over land; and warm temperatures encour-

age combustion. When these factors come together all that's needed is a spark—in the form of lightning, arson, a downed power line, or a burning campfire or cigarette—to ignite a blaze that could last for weeks and consume tens of thousands of acres.

These violent infernos occur around the world and in most of the 50 states, but they are most common in the U.S. West, where heat, drought, and frequent thunderstorms create perfect wildfire conditions. Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington, Colorado, Oregon, and California experience some of the worst conflagrations in the U.S. In California wildfires are often made worse by the hot, dry Santa Ana winds, which can carry a spark for miles.

Firefighters fight wildfires by depriving them of one or more of the fire triangle fundamentals. Traditional methods include water dousing and spraying fire retardants to extinguish existing fires. Clearing vegetation to create firebreaks starves a fire of fuel and can help slow or contain it. Firefighters also fight wildfires by deliberately starting fires in a process called controlled burning. These prescribed fires remove undergrowth, brush, and ground litter from a forest, depriving a wildfire of fuel.

Although often harmful and destructive to humans, naturally occurring wildfires play an integral role in nature. They return nutrients to the soil by burning dead or decaying matter. They also act as a disinfectant, removing disease-ridden plants and harmful insects from a forest ecosystem. And by burning through thick canopies and brushy undergrowth, wildfires allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, enabling a new generation of seedlings to grow.

We're Going Back To School





CAMPFIRE SAFETY GUIDE

Keep your campfire from becoming a wildfire with these tips!

BEFORE ...

- Choose a spot that's protected from wind gusts and at least 15 feet from your tent, gear, and anything flammable.
- Clear a 10-foot diameter area around your campfire spot by removing leaves, grass, and anything burnable down to the dirt.
- Don't build your campfire near plants or under tree limbs or other flammable material hanging overhead.
- If allowed, dig a pit for your campfire, about 1-foot deep, in the center of the cleared area.
- Build a fire ring around the pit with rocks to create a barrier.
- Don't use any type of flammable liquid to start your fire.
- Gather three types of wood to build your campfire and add them in this order:

1



Tinder – small twigs, dry leaves or grass, dry needles.

2



Kindling – dry sticks smaller than 1" around.

3



Firewood – larger, dry pieces of wood up to about 6-8" around.

DURING ...

- Keep your fire small.
- Always keep water and a shovel nearby and know how to use them to put out your campfire.
- Be sure an adult is always watching the fire.
- Keep an eye on the weather! Sudden wind gusts can blow sparks into vegetation outside your cleared area, causing unexpected fires.

REMEMBER: If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave.

AFTER ...

- If possible, allow your campfire to burn out completely – to ashes.
- Drown the campfire ashes with lots of water.
- Use a shovel to stir the ashes and water into a "mud pie." Be sure to scrape around the edges of the fire to get all the ashes mixed in.
 - Drown the ashes with water again.
- Check that your campfire is cold before leaving. Hold the back of your hand just above the wet ashes, especially around the edges of the fire. **DO NOT** touch the ashes or you might burn yourself.
- If you feel heat, stir more water into the ashes.
- When the ashes are cold, disassemble your fire ring and scatter the rocks.
 - If you built your campfire in a fire pit, be sure it's filled in with wet dirt.



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YEARS

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Proposed Changes to “Waters of the United States” Definition

Dated July 10, 2014. By University News Release. By: Amy Millmier Schmidt, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Livestock Bioenvironmental Engineer

The definition of the "waters of the United States" could still change. A proposed change to the definition of "waters of the United States" within the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) was published in the Federal Register in April. When a new regulation or change to an existing regulation is proposed, the agency in charge of that proposed rule must accept comments from the public related to the rule and consider those when drafting the final version of the regulation. The comment period on this rule is open until July 21, 2014, though an extension to the comment period has been requested. If granted, an additional 90 days may be available to submit comments.

The rule, if passed, will redefine "waters of the United States" to include intermittent and ephemeral streams, along with other non-navigable water bodies. Though the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) insist that the rule is designed to reduce confusion about CWA protection, questions remain about whether the language used in the proposed rule will broaden jurisdiction in a way that may negatively affect agricultural practices. For instance, the CWA as it is currently written authorizes the federal government to regulate only "navigable" waters.

By expanding jurisdiction to intermittent streams and similar bodies of water that are not considered navigable, some are concerned that application of manure on lands near these water bodies could be considered a discharge and require a CWA permit. A movement led by the Farm Bureau is focused on encouraging voluntary withdrawal of the rule by the EPA and Corps or action from Congress if the rule is not withdrawn voluntarily. The social media hashtag #DitchTheRule can be followed for updates. The proposed rule and supporting documents can be viewed on the EPA website <http://www2.epa.gov/uswaters>.

Other Views On The Rule Changes

For more information on this subject or to see different views, check out these sites:

- ◆ Clean Water Act Update: EPA and Army Corps Propose Significant Changes to the Definition of "Waters of the United States" at <http://landuselaw.jmbm.com/2014/03/clean-water-act-update-epa-and-army-corps-propose-significant-changes-to-the-definition-of-waters-of.html>
- ◆ Proposed Changes to “Waters of the United States”. By the National Association of Home Builders. Website: <http://www.nahb.org/generic.aspx?genericContentID=226061>
- ◆ EPA and the Army Corp “Proposed Rule to Define “Waters of the United States”. By Claudia Copeland, Specialist in Resources and Environmental Policy. For the pdf copy use this link: <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R43455.pdf>



Safety First . . .

Safety Is In Your Hands - Unexpected Hazards

Submitted by Joe Miles, MFC Fire Services, SED.

The photo below was taken yesterday (7/17/2014) of an area that was being cleared by hand next to a boundary line tree. The employee that cleared this area came within inches of a large snake that, as you can see, was at eye level and more than ready to strike.

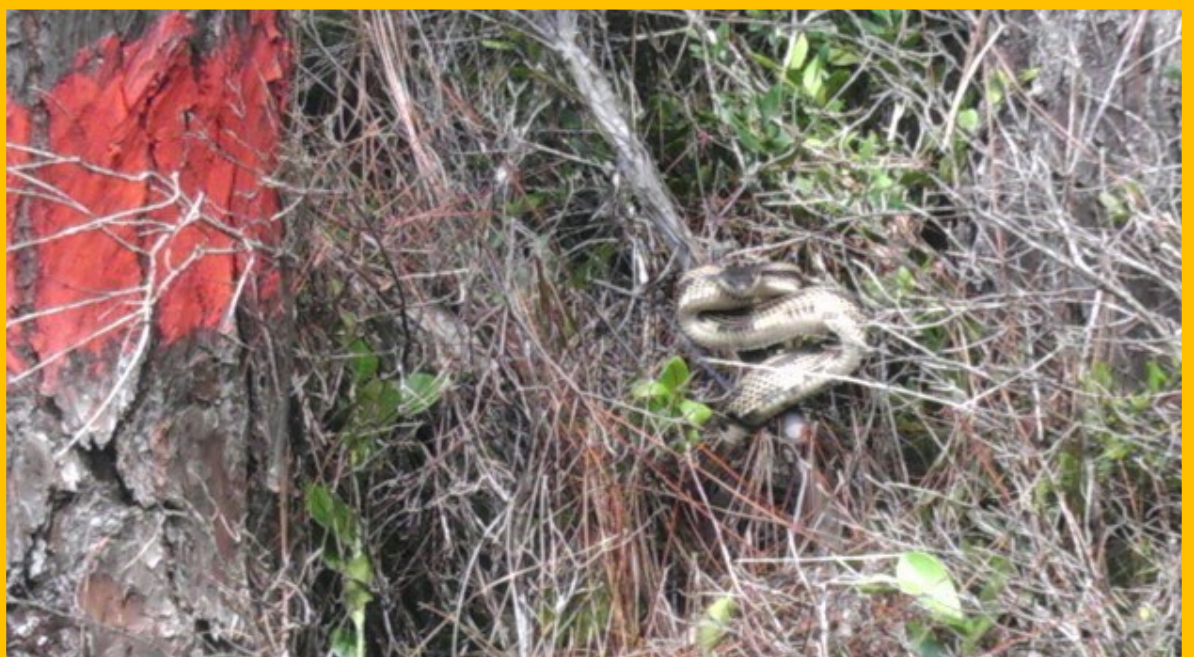
This event lends itself to safety in a number of ways that we can pass on to our employees. Safety equipment works great when the safety threat is located in an expected or normal area. E.g. Snake leggings protect from snake bites only on areas covered by the legs. In this instance, snake leggings would have provided no protection if a bite would have occurred. This is not to say that we should abandon the use of safety equipment. On the contrary, we should wear these safety items (PPE's) in the manner intended and with the knowledge of the protection that they offer but not as an absolute protector against all dangers. Along with knowing the limitation of our PPE's, we should also be aware of our surroundings. This

is known as situational awareness in the wildfire community. This way of thinking is drilled into all Wildland firefighters from day one. However, it is an idea that should not be used exclusively in the wildfire arena. Situational Awareness should be used in all working environments. Being aware of the hazards in places where we expect and also places not so likely is the only way to reduce accidents. In other words, good situational awareness works whether we are talking about a wildfire or a snake at eye level. We need to learn to expect the unexpected. Our experience in life tells us that a snake will be on the ground; therefore we do not expect a snake at eye level. To be able to turn our unexpected hazards into an event that is anticipated will reduce our vulnerability to accidents. Reducing accidents

should be our highest priority.

More often than not, hazards and sometimes the accidents that do occur, start off in unanticipated and overlooked locations. This near catastrophe is a good example of those unexpected hazards. We can find the correlation between this "near miss" to any number of safety hazards that we encounter daily. The hard part is training our employees to recognize both the expected and the unexpected. When we accomplish that task, the number of accidents will inevitably decrease.

The employee, in this instance, backed away from the unexpected hazard before disaster occurred.



First Time, Every Time